

REMARKS

By this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 7, 14 and 16. Accordingly, claims 2-12 and 14-20 remain pending in the application.

Reexamination and reconsideration of this patent application are respectfully requested in view of the following Remarks.

In previous office action, claims 7, 14 and 16 were rejected over Ham U.S. patent 5,567,552 ("Ham") alone, or in combination with Randall et al. U.S. patent application publication 2002/0094492 ("Randall").

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims 2-12 and 14-20 are patentable over Ham alone, or in combination with Randall, for at least the following reasons.

Among other things, each of the independent claims 7, 14 and 16 recite that when the mask is used to pattern a photoresist layer by passing light therethrough, the auxiliary pattern reduces only a portion of an intensity of the light. Such a feature can be understood, for example, by inspection of FIG. 3B of the present patent application, where it is seen that the auxiliary pattern reduces only a portion of the light intensity. Therefore the light intensity reduced by the auxiliary pattern is still higher than the reference light intensity, e.g., 0.2 in FIG. 3B.

In contrast, in Ham the Cr pattern **completely** reduces the light intensity and makes the light intensity to be zero (see FIG. 2).

Meanwhile, claims 2-6, 8-13, 15 and 17-20 all depend variously from claims 7, 14 and 16.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons above, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-12 and 14-20 are all patentable over the cited prior art.

CONCLUSION

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submits that claims 2-12 and 14-20 are all patentable over the cited prior art. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that claims 2-12 and 14-20 be allowed, and that the application be

passed to issue. In the event there are any outstanding matters, the Examiner invited to contact the undersigned attorney at (571) 283.0740.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0238 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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